

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

NINETEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session



HOUSE BILL NO. 1550

Introduced by
REPRESENTATIVE JOSE MARIA R. ZUBIRI, JR.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Agricultural workers especially farmers and fisherfolk remain one of the poorest in the country despite their importance in the country's strive for food security. The produce of agricultural workers is a staple in every household in the country. We deem them our heroes but the stark truth is that more often than not, they are left behind.

Farmers and fisherfolks languish in poverty while the rest of the country enjoy and eat the products of their hard work. As such, it is but fitting to implement policies and programs that will help them out of poverty.

The establishment of a Pension Fund for Agricultural Workers will provide benefits when they reach the age of retirement. It is likewise hoped that with this, the sons and daughters of the beneficiaries of this fund will not shy away from continuing the work their parents have done. After all, the robust agricultural sector is key for food sustainability and economic progress.

Thus, approval of this bill is earnestly sought.

JOSE MARIA R. ZUBIRI, JR.
Representative
Third District, Bukidnon

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AN ACT
PROVIDING PENSION BENEFITS TO FARMERS AND FISHERFOLK
THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A PENSION FUND FOR FARMERS
AND FISHERFOLK AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS THEREFOR

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippines in Congress assembled:

Section 1. This Act shall be known as the "Pension Fund for Agricultural Workers Act."

Section 2. Declaration of Policy. – It is hereby declared a policy of the State to ensure a robust agricultural sector by providing the necessary benefits for agricultural workers. The State likewise recognize the importance of farmers and fisherfolk in a robust agricultural sector necessary for a country's development.

Section 3. Creation of a Pension Fund for Farmers and Fisherfolk. – The Pension Fund for Farmers and Fisherfolk is hereby established to provide pension benefits to farmers and fisherfolk.

Section 4. Implementing Agency. – The Philippine Crop Insurance Corporation (PCIC), an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture (DA), shall be the implementing agency of the provisions of this Act. In addition to its existing duties and responsibilities, it shall:

- (a) Create a pension plan for farmers and fisherfolk;
- (b) Manage and invest the Pension Fund for Farmers and Fisherfolk to ensure its sustainability;
- (c) Determine the criteria for eligibility, in coordination with relevant government agencies;
- (d) Perform other duties and functions towards the efficient and effective implementation of this Act.

Section 5. Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). – Within ninety (90) days from the effectivity of this Act, the PCIC Board of Directors, in consultation with the Secretary of Agriculture and representatives of recognized farmers and fisherfolks group, shall promulgate the rules and regulations necessary for the effective implementation of this Act.

Section 6. Appropriations. Such amount necessary to implement the provisions of this Act shall be included in the annual appropriations of the DA.

Section 7. Separability Clause. – If any part or provision of this Act is held invalid or unconstitutional, the remaining parts or provisions not affected shall remain in full force and effect.

Section 8. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

Section 9. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in the Official Gazette or in any newspaper of general circulation.

Approved,